

Progress in 2000-2001 Plans for 2002

In This Issue:

Work Completed in 2000-2001
Field Seasons

Local Hire

Treatability Study

Work Planned for 2002

Community Outreach

Contacts

Environmental Justice Demonstration Project

Annette Island has been selected as one of 15 national Federal Interagency Environmental Justice (EJ) demonstration projects. The EJ committee, made up of the heads of different federal agencies and White House officials, is working together with the MIC to identify and make use of Federal resources to benefit Annette Island environment and economy.

Brownfields Showcase Community

In October of 2000, the Metlakatla Indian Community was selected by the federal government as a Brownfields Showcase Community. Brownfields are abandoned or underused industrial properties that may have contamination. The goal is to work together to clean up and reuse these properties.

Working together, the Metlakatla Indian Community (MIC), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Alaska District (COE), the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) made a great deal of progress this past year on the Annette Island Cleanup! Here are highlights of some of the tasks we completed.

Work Completed In 2000- 2001 Field Seasons

Site Investigations

The COE investigated nine sites on the peninsula during 2001 for potential contamination. The FAA investigated approximately 53 sites and installed 100 groundwater monitoring wells and probes. Over 5,000 samples were collected to determine the extent of contamination that may have been released into the environment. Sampling locations included the former asphalt plant area, the tank farm at the old dock, and the former public school. The results of this investigation will be used to plan future site cleanup actions.



Old WWII firing range near airport:
Field crew sampling soil and
groundwater.

Work Completed In 2000–2001 Field Seasons (continued)

Removal Actions

Debris

- Drums, scrap metal, abandoned vehicles, and collapsed buildings were removed from 30 sites.
- Contaminated debris was removed from the former World War II (WWII) hospital site.
- Eight buildings, foundations, and associated contaminated debris were dismantled and disposed of by the BIA.



Former WWII hospital site: Workers wearing protective gear remove contaminated soils. Larry Shearer is the person standing in the center. July 2001.

Towers

- Forty-five abandoned towers with lead-based paints were demolished and recycled.

Contaminated Soil

- The COE removed mercury-contaminated soil from the WWII water-treatment plant at Yellow Hill Lake.



Barge loaded with 750 tons of steel from towers, tanks, drums, and cars that were removed from various sites during 2000. The scrap steel was recycled at a facility in Seattle.

Scrap Metal

- The 750-ton pile of scrap metal at the quarry was removed by the FAA and shipped off the island. This included metal belonging to BIA, MIC, FAA, and COE.

Drums

- A total of 800 abandoned drums were removed from the airfield and recycled off the island.
- A total of 60 abandoned and tar-filled drums were removed from the Gillnet Creek area.

Fuel Pipeline Cleaning and Abandonment

- Approximately 10,000 feet of former fuel line was drained and cleaned to prevent any future leaks or spills. Approximately 7,000 gallons of fuel/water mixture were removed.

Work Completed In 2000-2001 Field Seasons (Continued)



BIA Roads Shop before demolition of buildings in 2000.

Fuel Storage Tanks

- A total of 14 underground fuel storage tanks and one aboveground fuel storage tank were removed and disposed of off the island by the FAA.
- The BIA removed 4 bulk storage tanks next to Promech Air in downtown Metlakatla.
- The BIA removed and disposed of 17 tanks that contained asphalt and fuel from the Roads Shop.



Field crew sampling groundwater, fall 2000.

Culvert Installation

- A new culvert was installed across Colby Creek (at the former WWII hospital area) to help protect the fish and provide the cleanup crew with safe access to the project site.



New fish-friendly culvert installed across Colby Creek.

Soil and Groundwater Sampling

- A total of 545 soil and groundwater samples were collected by the COE from various sites to test for possible contamination.

Historical Documentation

Archaeologists and historical architects have investigated and documented over 500 WWII and FAA buildings and structures on the peninsula during the past two years. The information they collected provides a valuable historical record of WWII and post-war activities on Annette Island.

Local Hire

Federal agencies involved in the Annette Island Environmental Cleanup encourage hiring Metlakatla residents whenever qualified personnel are available. We work through the TERO and MIC Environmental Office.



Metlakatla residents (left to right) Rob Scott, Benny Eaton, and Tim Williams worked on the FAA tower demolition project in the summer of 2000.

- The FAA and MIC accomplished two projects through government-to-government contracts. The first project was clearing approximately 30 sites. The second project was the removal of buildings, debris, and vehicles at the sites.
- This work was conducted in preparation for the investigation work that was performed at these sites during the 2000 field season. As part of the field crew, Metlakatla residents also worked on tank and tower removals, site investigations, and soil treatability studies. In all, the FAA hired over a

dozen local residents. The BIA hired tribal members to dismantle eight buildings at the BIA Roads Shop and move contaminated material into the quarry for disposal.

- During 2001 field effort, the COE subcontractor, Jacobs, hired five Metlakatla residents for the field crew. Haven Construction was hired to do the construction work. Also, COE contracted directly with MIC for site investigation and tank removals at five sites.
- In 2001, BIA contracted with MIC to remove four fuel-storage tanks in downtown Metlakatla.
- Contracts with MIC are coordinated through the MIC Environmental Office, who in turn hire qualified members and residents.



Ben Eaton is wrapping drums containing tar. The drums were removed from Gillnet Creek in 2001.

Treatability Study

For this ongoing study, the FAA constructed three soil cells at the Roads Shop, in a space provided by the BIA. The purpose of the study is to determine the effectiveness of using land-farming and composting methods to treat fuel-contaminated soil. Fish and wood waste from the cannery and the mill are being used for the compost. Locally hired workers collect samples and mix the soil piles. Preliminary results of this study are very encouraging.



Unloading fish waste used for compost in the treatability study.

Work Planned for 2002



Former WWII hospital site: Gordon Ridley (left) and Dale Baines (right) assist Kelly McGovern (middle) in sampling groundwater from a monitoring well. July 2001.

- The FAA and COE are preparing plans for removing old buildings, debris, and towers during the summer of 2002.

This project is called **"Operation Clean Sweep."**

The plans for this project will be reviewed by the MIC Environmental Office before any removal work begins. The purpose of **"Operation Clean Sweep"** is to remove the remains of buildings and structures from WWII and the early post-war years.

- Now that the old buildings are gone from the Roads Shop, the BIA plans to collect soil samples from the 2-1/2-acre area around the buildings.

Sampling results will determine if any additional site cleanup is necessary.

- The Coast Guard plans to demolish three above-ground fuel tanks that are located near the old hangar.
- The FAA and the COE are studying the chemical and soil information collected during the last investigations. The results of the sampling effort will help us plan for future site cleanup actions.

Community Outreach

MIC Health Fair

The COE/FAA Safety Booth at the Health Fair gave us an opportunity to talk to many of the grade school and middle school kids. They asked us lots of good questions! Everyone had fun trying on the safety gear worn by the field crew and having their pictures taken. A display board at the booth showed photographs of work being done at many of the cleanup sites on the island.



Jared Milligrock, John Lindblade, and Matt Russell modeling some of the safety gear worn by the field crew.



Lyn Dokoozian, Jacobs Project Manager, explains work safety at the FAA/COE safety booth at the MIC Health Fair in May 2001.

MIC Founders' Day

We couldn't have asked for nicer weather for this year's Founders' Day! We really enjoyed talking with everyone that stopped by the COE/FAA booth to look at photographs of the Annette Island cleanup work and historic WW II buildings. Thanks to everyone who filled out the questionnaire about buildings you would like saved to promote tourism. To those of you who stopped by the booth after we ran out of the commemorative MIC Founders' Day posters: we hope to have more of these posters printed soon. If we do, there will be information in the *Malshk* on how to get a copy. We had a great time at this year's celebration, and some great food too!



If you would like to know more about the progress being made on the cleanup, please check the FAA's Annette Island Cleanup web site. Any community member with Internet access can find information about agencies, projects, and schedules. To ask specific questions about past or ongoing cleanup activities, you may contact the agency representatives listed below.



If you have enjoyed reading this newsletter and want to receive future newsletters about the Annette Island Cleanup, please mail the attached prepaid postcard. Thank you.

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